



Weight Loss: Yes, you can.



Weight is your total body weight including body fat, muscle, organs, tissues, skin, water, and bones. What we really mean when we say, “I am going to lose some weight” is a reduction in body fat.

Why does weight matter? When too much body fat has accumulated, it impacts total fitness to include heart and lung function, sleep patterns, back health, sense of well-being, quality of life, and everyday activities. If you have sustained an injury or are ill, there are important benefits related to your recovery that will improve as you lose unhealthy body fat. Two of the many benefits associated with losing excess body fat are improved rate of healing and tissue repair and improved range of motion.

All human bodies operate on the same premise of energy balance. In order to lose weight, Energy (calories) IN needs to be less than Energy (calories) OUT. For example, eating 500 less calories each day and burning off an extra 200 calories by increasing activity throughout the day will allow for gradual weight loss and maintain your muscle mass. As you consider your energy balance needs for weight loss include the following healthy weight loss tips gathered from the National Weight Control Registry (NWCR).

| Tips | Strategies |
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| Lower your caloric intake | Start thinking about where you can cut calories - soda, chips, fast food, sweets. Anything in your diet that is low in nutritional value (junk food) is worth eliminating or reducing. Replace with fruits and vegetables. |
| Eat breakfast | Try an item with protein and carbohydrates – choices might include: low fat chocolate milk with peanut butter toast, Vanilla yogurt with fruit and walnuts, or an egg and whole grain toast. |
| Watch less than 10 hours of television/week | The less sedentary you can be the better it is for your health and your metabolism. Try some of the following ideas: clean a room, garden, try a new active hobby – yoga, snorkeling, etc. |
| Increase your physical activity level* | Try a new adaptive sports activity or talk to your physical therapist or rehabilitation specialist about appropriate physical activities related to your condition. |
| Weigh yourself once /week | Once a week is often enough to weigh yourself to check for progress during the losing phase. Choose to weigh on the same scale, at the same time of day, and dressed in similar clothing. |
| Join a program or gain support | Being around like minded people can help with staying on track with your goals. |

*Benefits of physical activity based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention include improved heart and lung function, mobility, coordination, balance, and social interaction. Activity is an excellent stress relief aid.



Resources

National Weight Control Registry (NWCR)

NWCR is the largest prospective investigation of long-term successful weight loss maintenance.

<http://www.nwcr.ws/>

Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC) –WII Weight Management

This site provides information on weight loss to our Wounded, Ill and Injured population.

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/wounded-ill-and-injured/Pages/weight-management.aspx>

Warrior Games – TeamUSA

Warrior Games provides information on Paralympics sports.

<http://www.teamusa.org/warriorgames/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

This CDC site provides the Surgeon General's information on physical activity.

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/sgr/ataplan.htm>

Adaptive Sports Foundation

The Adaptive Sports Foundation is dedicated to providing sports information and activities for those with injuries.

<http://www.adaptivesportsfoundation.org/>

USDA Choose MyPlate – SuperTracker

The Super Tracker is an individualized diet planning and tracking system.

<https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/default.aspx>

NMCPHC –sponsored American Council on Exercise (ACE) Fit Facts Article

Don't skip breakfast to cut calories article from ACE.

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/active-living/weight-management/Don't-Skip-Breakfast-to-Cut-Calories.pdf>

BrainLine Military – Article on Exercise and your Brain

BrainLine Military article on exercises' positive impact on brain health.

<http://www.brainline.org/content/2008/08/exercise-and-your-brain.html>